

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, PINS, PINT, CI
SUBJECT: GOC HAS FIRST, SECOND AND THEN FIRST THOUGHTS AGAIN ON
MASS DEMONSTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 11

1. ON JULY 28 INTERIOR MINISTER RAUL BANAVIDES ANNOUNCED A CRASH "WAR ON POVERTY" FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, CULMINATING WITH THE SEPTEMBER 11 ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1973 COUP. HE DESCRIBED IT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PARADES AND LARGE RALLIES OF PREVIOUS YEARS. BENAVIDES URGED PRIVATE AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO JOIN THE GOC IN "AN INTENSIVE SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM TO ERRADICATE EXTREME POVERTY IN THE COUNTRY". ON AUGUST 19, HOWEVER, THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS, COLONEL SERGIO BADIOLA, AUTHORIZED "IN PRINCIPLE" A PLANNED MASS DEMONSTRATION, STATING THAT THE GOC HAD "ACCEDED TO THE REQUESTS OF NUMEROUS CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS" FOR SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS. ON AUGUST 24 PRESIDENT PINOCHET REVERSING FIELD AGAIN", TOLD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THAT HE DID NOT WANT A PUBLIC GATHERING TO COMMEMORATE THE JUNTA'S FOURTH ANNIVERSARY. HE SAID THE MONEY COULD BETTER BE SPENT ON PROGRAMS FOR THE POOR.

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2. AS THINGS NOW STAND, PINOCHET WILL ADDRESS THE NATION THROUGH THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11.

3. COMMENT: WE ASSUME THAT THE GOC JUDGED THE MOOD CORRECTLY THE FIRST TIME WHEN IT CALLED FOR SUPPORTERS TO JOIN DO-GOOD PROJECTS IN THE SLUMS IN

LIEU OF STAGING A MASS RALLY. A DEMONSTRATION COULD PROVIDE GROUND FOR INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS WITH TURNS IN PREVIOUS YEARS AND, IN THE GOC VIEW, MIGHT EVEN ENTAIL SOME RISK OF PROTEST INCIDENTS--NOW THAT CHILEAN POLITICAL LIFE IS SOMEWHAT MORE OPEN THAN ANYTIME SINCE THE COUP. THE SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE (THE GOC PUBLIC RELATIONS AND CIVIC-SUPPORT ORGANIZATION) SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN BRIEFLY CARRIED AWAY WITH ITS OWN OPERATIONS' EFFECTIVENESS AND APPARENTLY WAS REINED-IN BY THE PRESIDENT.

4. SEPTEMBER 11 SPEECHES HAVE, IN THE PAST, BEEN HARD HITTING RECAPITULATIONS OF THE JUNTA'S BASIC POLICIES. THEY HAVE TENDED TO OBSCURE RATHER THAN CLARIFY THE ACTUAL CHANGES BEING PUT INTO EFFECT. NELSON

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